



3493 Darrow Road, Stow, Ohio 44224  
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# PATHWAYS

AUGUST 2024

*You show me the path of life. In  
your presence there is fullness of joy.*  
Psalm 16:11

Find us on social  
media @FCCStow!

## **Youth Group Kick Off**

**Sunday, August 11<sup>th</sup> (Mini Golf!) and August 25<sup>th</sup> (Pool Party & Cookout!)**

Can you believe it? Summer is almost over! Before we get into full gear for the school year, all Youth Students are invited to join us for two different days in August! On the 11<sup>th</sup> for mini golf at Downview Sports (For just \$5!) and on August 25<sup>th</sup> for a day of Pool Party fun and a Cookout!

## **Celebration and Recognition of Anne Reiman and Family**

**Sunday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, Second Service**

And on Sunday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, during second service, we will honor and celebrate all of this work and ministry. It will be our chance to say “thank-you” to the whole Reiman Family. We invite you to bring cards of thanks and celebration to the church during August and place them in the collection basket so that we can give them a gift from all of us on the 1<sup>st</sup>. We hope you’ll gather together with us to bless them in this next chapter of the Reiman’s family life.

## **Chapel Restoration Committee Updates**

From John McCreight, Chair of Trustees

Look below for the latest news regarding the Chapel Restoration Program! We have great news to share and a timeline for contractors to begin working on restoring our Chapel Worship space. Come to the staff hallway and try out one of the (new to us) pews!

## **All Church Outing Akron Rubber Ducks Game**

**August 24<sup>th</sup>, First Pitch at 6:05 p.m.**

Join us for a wonderful night of fellowship and fun for an affordable price at our local baseball stadium! Fireworks will follow after the game! Tickets are just \$12! See Bill Dowey or contact the church office for more information or to sign up!

## **Summer Worship Hours – On Until Labor Day**

**First Service 8:30—Coffee Fellowship 9:30—Second Service 10:00**

In between services will be a special time of coffee fellowship for those who just came from first service and those coming to second service. This coffee fellowship will be held in our Library and Gathering Area and will offer a special opportunity for folks from the two services to see and greet one another!

## August 2024 Pastor's Pen

The turn of the calendar from July to August is always a tough one for me as it reminds me that my favorite time of the year will soon transition to a new season. Sure, there are still nearly two “official” months of summer, and sure, the next season always holds its own beauty, wonder, and frivolity—blessings in their own right—but for me, summer is just the best time of the year. (Not to be confused with “*the most wonderful time of the year*”, which is amazing too.) But “*back to school*” has always been a downer for me, even today when my kids go back to school because believe it or not, I actually like having my kids around all day every day. And yet, this August, I can’t help but wonder if my trepidation with the upcoming Fall season has something to do with my worry, and yes fear, that the state of our country, and events happening around the world, are all setting us up for a potentially horrid and dreadful November. These feelings, worries, and wonderings all stem from so much inflammatory rhetoric, blistering judgement and condemnation across social media, which all leads to and fuels ongoing acts of escalating violence.

It’s hard to watch or even keep up with the news because it seems like it’s always the same news—clear and distinct lines have been drawn where one side embraces their compatriots as wholly complete, sane, righteous, and good, while condemning anyone on the other side of that line as wholly incomplete, insane, unrighteous, and not just bad, but vile and evil. Is this who we are now? Is this the new normal? Where is this going to take us? How will this end? So, yeah, I am worried and a bit fearful.

I’ve been watching a lot of the Olympics. (I know, that was a hard turn straight out of right field but hang with me for a second.) I’ve always loved the Olympics—especially the summer Olympics because it has tons of sports that have always enthralled me but rarely got to watch. Sports like water polo, table tennis, field hockey, rugby, fencing, even badminton. (Did you know a badminton birdie, aka *shuttlecock*, is the fastest recorded object in sports at 307 miles per hour!?) And of course, I won’t miss any of the U.S. soccer games if I can help it. (Although I was glad I missed the U.S. Men’s soccer verses

Morocco. Ugh. That was not fun.) Regardless of the sport though, the Olympics are meant to be a time for the world to come together and do what? Play games. Yes, I will certainly stipulate there is a massive and lucrative financial windfall surrounding the Olympics, not to mention controversy, but yet the *spirit* of the Olympics remains, I think and hope. And it is that *spirit* I seek to embrace and cheer for and, now more than ever, need—the idea, and the reality, of the world coming together to *play games*.

Play. Games. For two weeks that is what we are doing. “We” meaning “the world.” We have come together to play games, to watch games, to cheer on games, to be enthralled by games, to cry tears of joy, and yes tears of heartache, all brought on by fellow human beings from all over the world playing games. For two weeks these games are who we are. For two weeks these games are what is normal. For two weeks these games take us to a place of diverse unity. For two weeks it all ends with everyone standing as flags are raised, and anthems are played, regardless of whose flag or anthem it is.

Are these not the ideals upon which our nation was built? Are these not the virtues we hold dear? Life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness—we are doing a grave disservice to each of these when we forget how to play games with one another.

The Gospel of Matthew tells that Jesus said, “*Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.*” These words of our savior tell us those who live by the sword die by the sword, that those who speak violence and act in violent ways are met with violence. This is why if the state of our country and our world today is going to change and be better by this Fall, we need better, calmer, more righteous minds, more compassionate and empathetic hearts, and more “Olympic spirit” and Holy Spirit in one another and shared with one another.

So may we aim to be *Olympians* in our own way—sharing and spreading a presence and a spirit that embraces and celebrates the beautiful and diverse world our Creator has made, all while we seek to play games with anyone and everyone.

Your Pastor and Friend,  
Jonathan

## **Celebrating Ministry: Anne Reiman and Family** **Sunday, September 1<sup>st</sup>**

Earlier this summer we received the news that Anne Reiman would, understandably for family reasons and geographic reasons, be closing of The Nest Early Learning Center. This also meant that Anne would be stepping away from her position as our church's Nursery Attendant. This was bittersweet news for sure as we are sad to see them go, but we nonetheless give thanks to God for Anne and her family and for their ministry and many blessings they brought and gave here at First Christian Stow.

And on Sunday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, during second service, we will honor and celebrate all of this work and ministry. It will be our chance to say *thank you* and *fare-thee-well* to Anne, husband Danny, and their three sons, Charlie, Theo, and Phin.

As part of this celebration the Christian Education Department invites everyone to share an expression of thanks and farewell to Anne and family by bringing in, or sending to the church, cards of thanks and/or cards of well wishes as the Reiman family start a new chapter in their lives. There will be a basket to collect these cards over the next several weeks so that on September 1<sup>st</sup>, as part of our farewell liturgy and celebration, we will present the basket of cards to Anne and family. (If you wish to send a card, please send it to: *Anne Reiman and Family, c/o First Christian Church, 3493 Darrow Rd. Stow, OH 44224.*) That Sunday's coffee fellowship will be held after worship in honor of the Reiman family as part of this celebration.

## **Prayer Request Email List**

Friends, while many of us are getting updates regularly, there's now an easy way to get connected with the church's concerns and praises by signing up to the prayer request email list at the link below. If you have a prayer request, you'd like to share, you can always directly email the church office at [Fccstow@firstchristianstow.org](mailto:Fccstow@firstchristianstow.org) with the concern. If you know anyone who might like to be signed up for Prayer Requests, please share with them the link below!

<https://www.firstchristianstow.org/prayer-chain/>

## **Youth Group Kick-Off!** **Sunday, August 11<sup>th</sup>**

Hey youth! Are you sad about summer quickly coming to an end and school starting back up? Kind of a bummer, isn't it?! Well look on the bright side at least—Youth Group is back in session!! Another year in the life the FCC Youth Group will kick-off on **Sunday, August 11<sup>th</sup>** when we will finally get in that Putt-Putt outing that we didn't get to do back in June!

After church on Sunday, **August 11<sup>th</sup>** we will travel together to Downview Sports Center in Cuyahoga Falls to see who, if anyone, can beat Jonathan and/or Emily in a spirited round of mini golf! Cost is just \$5 per person and youth are welcome and encouraged to bring a friend! Lunch will be provided either before we leave for Downview, or perhaps we will bring lunch with us and enjoy it at the sports center. (TBD)

Then mark your calendars for **Sunday, August 25<sup>th</sup>** for our next installment of Youth Group. This too will happen right after church, and from there we will make the short drive over to Kent to the home of Debbie and Chris Smeiles home for a cookout and pool party! So be sure to bring your swimsuit, water wings, and a friend (if you like) for this day of fun in the sun!

The First Christian Church Youth Group is open to all youth in sixth grade and up and their friends. We meet, typically, twice a month on a bi-weekly schedule. For more information, please contact Director of Youth Ministries Emily Sanko, Directors of Christian Education Anna Llyod and Richelle Aukeman, or Jonathan.

## **Loaves & Fishes + Pantry** **August 18<sup>th</sup>, 4-6 p.m.**

Fighting food insecurity is a constant battle—Your volunteer time with this program does not go unnoticed by anyone. If you have the chance to share your abilities in this important work, please join us for the August drive-through meal, which will be held on the 18<sup>th</sup> from 4-6 p.m. We are serving Kielbasi and some delicious sides.

## Loaves & Fishes + Pantry

People from 36 families, totaling 104 people, came to Loaves & Fishes + Pantry on July 21.

People from 36 families, totaling 104 people, left Loaves & Fishes + Pantry on July 21 with hot meals for dinner that night and enough groceries for a week or more.

They also left with 4 rolls of toilet paper and a roll of paper towels.

All of this happened only because of the support of our church, its members, and its volunteers.

The opportunity to support and volunteer in Loaves & Fishes + Pantry is something for which we should all be thankful. Giving away food to the hungry is an excellent way to fulfill the commandment to love our neighbors.

We'll have that opportunity again on August 18<sup>th</sup>.

## Think – Pray – Connect Families from July

07/14/24

### **Margo & David Martin**

3969 Baumberger Rd, Stow OH  
44224

*Please join us in sending condolences to the Martin family, as David Martin Jr. passed away on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.*

07/21/24

### **Debi Redman**

141 S. Mantua St. Kent, OH 44240

*Please join us in sending condolences to the Redman family, as Debi's Father passed away recently.*

07/28/24

### **Jim Lloyd**

3855 Northview Dr. Stow, OH  
44224

*Please join us in sending condolences to Jim, as Debbie Lloyd, his wife, passed away last Sunday.*

## **Rae Howard**

658 Sydney Place, Tallmadge OH  
44278

*Send some well wishes cards to Rae as she recovers from having knee surgery last week.*

## Camp Firelight Vacation Bible School: Thank You!

We had 32 kiddos join us for Camp Firelight Vacation Bible School in July, we had so much fun! Thank you to Heidi Ott & MaryEllen and Tim Seitz for providing the Camp Cookout for our VBS Kickoff!

Thank you to the VBS volunteers all week who helped make this week so much fun!

*Check out our FCC Stow Facebook page for pictures from the week at VBS!*

## Coffee Fellowship Opportunities After Both Services in the Library

Just a reminder for those who aren't yet in the know-- Coffee Fellowship will be happening *between* services for the summer at 9:30 and will be available after second service as well! Now you're in the know!

There's still plenty of slots ahead of this Sunday for volunteering to host coffee fellowship! Help connect and fellowship with your church family!

## Chapel Committee Update

The Chapel Restoration team has met 3 or 4 times since my last report plus many emails & texts. We've met with our General Contractor, Electrician & Architect at 2 of the meetings.

We're hopeful that things will begin to physically start to happen (building) in September.

Thanks to David Helmick, and his helpers, in getting the new (to us) pews for the Chapel. That will save us funds that we can use elsewhere in the rebuild!

We are still asking everyone to stay out of the chapel since it is not safe. We have part of the ceiling shored up until the final resolution is built. Thank you all for your thoughts & prayers during this time! We don't have an estimated completion date yet, but hopefully will have some idea soon. John McCreight – Trustee Chair.

**Rubber Ducks Game and Fireworks, Saturday, August 24<sup>th</sup>**

**First Pitch is set for 6:05\***

*\*Note this is one hour EARLIER than the usual start time!*

Once again FCC Stow will spend a summer evening with the Akron Rubber Ducks. This has become a summertime tradition for our church and friends where we enjoy a carefree night at Canal Park watching the Rubber Ducks “*hit em where they ain't*”, and then take in a spectacular fireworks show after the game. And that is what we will do again this year, on Saturday, August 24<sup>th</sup>.

Tickets are just \$12! What a bargain! A night at the ballpark and fireworks for just twelve bucks!? Hard to beat that deal! Unless you're bringing your kids with you. Then it might not become such a great deal once you start buying soda-pops, hotdogs, popcorn, peanuts, Cracker Jack, Dippin Dots, and the infamous Rubber Duck bubble blower gun—because of course you can't take the one you got last year, you have to get a new one! (Does anyone want to take the preacher's kids with them to the game?! Because the preacher might “*still be working on his sermon for Sunday*” at that time!) See Bill Dowey or contact the church office to reserve your tickets!

**Vacant Nursery Attendant Position:  
The Search Begins!**

First Christian Church of Stow is now hiring a Nursery Attendant for Sunday Mornings. The Nursery Attendant is responsible for childcare for children ages 0 to 5 while their families attend church service. The role involves engaging in age-appropriate activities, ensuring the safety and well-being of the children, and maintaining a clean and organized environment.

*Please know that in this time of transition we will still continue to offer nursery care each Sunday. Anna and Richelle will partner in staffing*

*the nursery so that any family who wishes to utilize the nursery can do so.*

Requirements for the Nursery Attendant:

- Sunday Mornings 9:30am - 12:00pm
- Experience working with children ages 0-5
- Must be at least 18 years of age
- Completion of CPR / First Aid Training

**Background Check required**

Interested candidates can apply by emailing a resume to [christianed@firstchristianstow.org](mailto:christianed@firstchristianstow.org)

**Acme Community Cash Back Program  
August Through December**

Save all your Acme Receipts from August 4<sup>th</sup> through December 25<sup>th</sup>! There will be a box in the sanctuary to deposit your receipts in on Sundays. Proceeds will benefit Dorcas Rebekah Guild, Mary Martha Guild, and our Blanket Ministry.

**Fall Hiking Spree in Cuyahoga Falls  
Invite a friend and take a hike!**

Start planning your hikes soon! Starting September 1<sup>st</sup>, Residents of Summit County can earn rewards for their hiking in Summit Metro Parks! (Out-of-County hikers can pay \$10 for their first-year hiking, and \$5 for returning hikers). All you have to do is sign up on <https://www.summitmetroparks.org/hiking-sprees.aspx>, download the participant form, and complete at least *eight* of the designated trails between September 1<sup>st</sup> and November 30<sup>th</sup> to receive rewards! You can update your form as you hike your chosen trails, and when you've completed the minimum of 8, stop by or send the form to the Summit Metro Park offices to receive your rewards! There's a total of 13 different trails available for hiking in the Summit Metro Parks network—Check out the map on the Spree webpage to find your best hiking options.

**Summer Worship Hours  
8:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.**

Just a reminder! Our “Chapel” services will continue to be held at 8:30 a.m. every Sunday morning, and

our normal Sanctuary time has moved back by 30 minutes to 10:00 a.m. until Labor Day. Both services will be held in the Sanctuary until further notice.

**Share With Those In Need—**  
**Registering with the Akron Canton**  
**Regional Foodbank**



**AKRON-CANTON REGIONAL**  
**FOODBANK**

If you know anyone who is living paycheck to paycheck, or is struggling to make ends meet at all, please consider sharing this information with them. The Akron Canton Regional Foodbank is a great program with places to get food security around Northeast Ohio. Below is a link to help people find an organization with a Foodbank pantry near you. While times are tough for many folks, especially those with children, this is one of the best ways for folks to find a program closer to themselves, or even to come to our Loaves & Fishes + Pantry for the meal AND groceries.

Programs can be found in the counties listed below:

- Carroll

- Stark
- Holmes
- Summit
- Medina
- Tuscarawas
- Portage
- Wayne

Please share this link with anyone you know who could use some help getting by.

<https://www.akroncantonfoodbank.org/find-help>.

**Bulldog Bags Donation Items**

Our collection for Bulldog Bags starts in September! The whole year's schedule has been made—Below is the next three months. Any donations can be placed in the Bulldog Bin in the Gathering Area. Thank you for your continued outreach support to our community!

-Wanda Deiwert

<u>Due Date:</u>	<u>Item:</u>
Sept. 8th:	Toothpaste and Tooth Brush
Oct. 6th:	Mac and Cheese Cup
Nov. 3rd:	Cup of Soup

**Summit County Safe Surrender Initiative**  
**Houses of the Lord, August 7-10, 9 p.m. – 5 p.m.**

Friends,

Below is a letter from Akron Municipal Court regarding their upcoming Safe Surrender event. This event is a safe way for people who believe they have a warrant to appear before a judge with a public defender and have their case heard in hours rather than days or months, and without the risk that comes with arrest or search warrants being carried out. If there's a loved one in your life who is looking to put their troubles with the law behind themselves as quickly and safely as possible, please share the information below with them. Most people with non-violent offenses aren't taken into custody. Be aware, they cannot serve cases outside of Summit County.

-Christian

For the first time in ten years, local agencies are partnering for "Summit County Fugitive Safe Surrender" which will take place August 7-10, 2024 from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. each day. By going to the House of the Lord at 1650 Diagonal Road in Akron, fugitives can safely turn themselves in.

Those looking for services and assistance should arrive prior to 4:00 p.m. each day to allow for sufficient processing time. While it's not an amnesty program, Summit County Fugitive Safe Surrender grants people with outstanding felony and misdemeanor warrants (including traffic violations) a chance to resolve those issues in a community-based setting.



This program offers an opportunity for individuals who have a warrant or license forfeiture to surrender in a safe environment. Pursuing a safe surrender helps reduce risk of the fugitive, the law-enforcement officers who pursue them and the neighborhoods that harbor them. This also clears judicial dockets which helps serve the community.

In addition to the Akron Municipal Court, representatives from Barberton Municipal Court, the Summit County Common Pleas Court General Division and the Summit County Domestic Relations Court will be on-site along with each corresponding Clerk of Courts and Prosecutor’s Office staff.

Additional partners working in support of this event include Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro, the Summit County Sheriff’s Office, the Summit Legal Defender’s Office, the Ohio Attorney General’s Office, the Akron Bar Association, Oriana House and the Akron Police Department.

The last event of this nature took place in June 2014 at the House of the Lord.

The six Akron Municipal Court Judges are in support of Fugitive Safe Surrender: Administrative/Presiding Judge Annalisa S. Williams, Judge Jerry Larson, Judge Jon Oldham, Judge Ron Cable, Judge Nicole Walker and Judge David Hamilton.

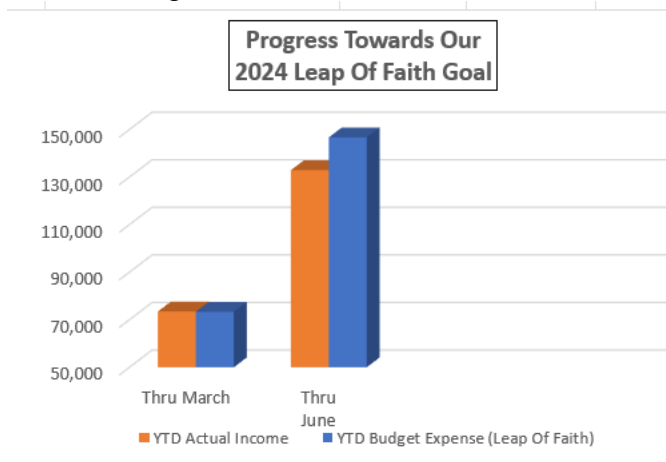
Questions about the event can be answered by visiting [https://sheriff.summitoh.net/files/34540/file/fugitive-safe-surrender\\_faq.pdf](https://sheriff.summitoh.net/files/34540/file/fugitive-safe-surrender_faq.pdf) or by calling (330) 643-2114.

**Update from the Finance/Stewardship Team**  
**Financial Giving – Through June 2024**

Hello all! Though we are still finalizing all expenses for June,).

The Leap of Faith amount for 2024 is \$18,787 (Budgeted Expenses minus Budgeted Income).

As you may recall, the Governing Board and the congregation approved the 2024 budget proposed by the Finance/Stewardship with the budgeted Expenses being higher than the budgeted Income. We refer to this difference as our Leap of Faith. We can achieve that Leap of Faith combining 2 goals; increasing our Income (primarily made up of Individual Giving) and decreasing our Expenses by controlling our spending. Here are 2 views that show our progress towards meeting our Leap of Faith. These compare our total actual income to our total budgeted expenses, showing how close we are now at the end of September, comparing that to end of August.



	Thru March	Thru June
<b>YTD Actual Income</b>	73,485	132,864
<b>YTD Budget Expense (Leap Of Faith)</b>	\$ 73,332	146,663
<b>How Close to LOF (%)</b>	100%	91%
<b>How Close to LOF (\$)</b>	\$ (154)	\$ (13,799)

The Total Income budget amount is \$22,878 per month. This includes congregational giving and other income sources like building rental.

The Total Expense budget amount is \$24,444 per month.

The Leap of Faith amount is the difference between our budgeted Expenses and our budgeted Income.

For the full year that amount is \$18,787 and monthly the amount is \$1,566.

If you prefer to think of this as a percentage, our actual income needs to be 7% higher than our budgeted income to meet our Leap of Faith, and thru the end of June our income is 3% lower than our budgeted income.

If you personally are feeling financially stable and would like to make an additional gift to the church above your normal giving, those are always appreciated. Any increases will help position us to be able to meet our Leap of Faith, and to sustain the outreach assistance we can provide to our community, both locally and globally. Please let any member of the Finance/Stewardship team know if you would like to see our full reports, we are happy to share them. We also will be sending out individual giving statements so you can see (and confirm) the financial gifts you have made so far this year.

**Stewardship Note: Online Giving  
Ease and Accessibility!**

Did you know that you can make your financial contributions to our church electronically? This can be done using your checking account, savings account or credit card. Here are the options currently available.

Option	Details	Pros – Cons
Bill Pay Using Your Bank	Most banks provide bill pay options for free.	Pro: No fee for you and 100% of the amount goes to the church; Your account information is not shared Con: No credit card option
EFT Using Vanco	Secure Link on FirstChristianStow.org under the Electronic Giving option on the home screen.	Pro: Options include credit card, checking or savings account; Can be set up on your behalf by our Financial Secretary by you filling out an authorization form Con: Vanco charges fees (they vary based on CC or bank account type), so the church receives less than 100% of your donation; Your account information is accessible to our Financial Secretary through the Vanco secure site
PayPal	Secure Link on FirstChristianStow.org under the Electronic Giving option on the home screen, or available through the PayPal website/mobile app	Pro: Options include credit card, checking or savings account; Convenient if you already use PayPal Con: PayPal charges fees so the church receives less than 100% of your donation.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

Q - Are any of the options above easier/harder for the Financial Secretary to handle?

A - Nope! Bill pay thru your bank account generates a paper check to the church. Vanco or PayPal generates an email notification. Either way, the information still needs to be entered into the church’s management software.

Q - What are the fees and how can they be offset?

A – They vary for Vanco/PayPal but generally the fee is 2%-3% of the transaction amount. This can be offset by increasing the amount given. For example, you wish to donate \$100, then make the transaction \$103. There are no fees to you or the church when you set up your giving through your bank’s website. If you would like assistance with this, please contact Lisa Roseman (Financial Secretary) or any member of the Stewardship Team.

**Stewardship Team Members**

Jim Hindel, Al Naylor, Dave Helmick, Barb Bell, Lisa Roseman